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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Peachtree Corners Neighborhoods Embrace COPS Program

PEACHTREE CORNERS, GA, April 28, 2015 – It's been well established that trust, mutual respect and good communications between police and the communities they serve is paramount to public safety.

It's the philosophy of the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) and an approach that has long been embraced by the Peachtree Corners community. Nationwide, communities including many in Peachtree Corners, subscribe to the program which was founded in 1994 on the concept of community policing and community partnerships.

In Peachtree Corners, 27 neighborhoods support the program; many were on hand recently for the annual COPS meeting held at Christ the King Church. The event is sponsored by the United Peachtree Corners Civic Association (UPCCA).

"The Peachtree Corners community is very supportive of the program," said Gwinnett County Police Department's Officer Shane Kelly, one of the speakers at the annual meeting. "And we have three more neighborhoods in the pipeline to join the program."

Joining is a simple three-step process said Officer Kelly.

1. 50 percent of the neighborhood agrees to support the program
2. The neighborhood holds an annual community social gathering
3. A representative from the neighborhood attends the annual Gwinnett County Fall Safety event held at Coolray Field each year.

The premise of the COPS program is to be proactive. "If you see something, say something," said Kelly. "We want you to call us if you see something suspicious."

Over 175 residents came Monday night to meet and hear Gwinnett County's new police chief Butch Ayers, West Precinct's commander Major Gale Higginbotham, which covers Peachtree

Corners, Danny Porter, the county's district attorney, Corporal David Martinez and Officer Shane Kelly. They were on hand to discuss various topics related to community safety and answer questions.

"It says a lot about a community when the county's new chief of police, a police major and the district attorney take the time to meet with a community," said Mayor Mike Mason. "The large turnout tonight shows the tremendous amount of trust and respect there is between the community and Gwinnett County Police Department."

Working in concert with the COPS program is the Crime Free Multi-Housing program that partners with apartment operators and residents to reduce and eliminate crimes. Currently nine apartment communities are participating in the program said Corporal David Martinez who heads up the program.

"The crime rate in Gwinnett is very favorable," said Police Chief Ayers who cited statistics show the uniform crime rate was down county wide for the 2013-2014 reporting period.

For more information on the COPS program, contact Officer Shane Kelly via email at shane.kelly@gwinnettcounty.com.

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